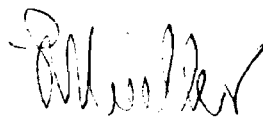


EPA notes that the majority of its Tier 1 PDEIS comments on noise and vibration, floodplains, wetlands, contaminated sites, environmental justice impacts, and cultural resources were acknowledged by JTA and deferred to the Tier 2 PEIS for further evaluation. EPA also requested either the inclusion or enhancement of the indirect, cumulative, irreversible and irretrievable impacts discussion in the PEIS. These issues were also deferred to the Tier 2 PEIS. Consequently, EPA has no additional review comments at this time.

EPA acknowledges JTA's effort to revise the PEIS to include a project summary and clarify the reason for eliminating light rail as a viable alternative. We also note the efforts made during the public hearing to accommodate both English and Spanish speaking residents. Overall, EPA supports transit options, including bus rapid transit. Alternative transit options generally reduce the amount of additional air emissions in the transportation corridor relative to the sole reliance on single occupancy vehicles. EPA also supports mass transit (light rail), hybrid transportation alternatives, smart growth approaches, and transit-oriented development for areas targeted for development to ensure that the proposed transit system optimizes regional air quality benefits and minimizes environmental impacts within the corridors.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments. EPA looks forward to working with JTA on the Tier 2 PEIS to ensure that deferred issues are further evaluated and addressed throughout the Tier 2 process. In the long run, the Jacksonville Bus Rapid Transit System should result in improved mobility and enhanced transit options in the Jacksonville metropolitan area. If we can be of further assistance in this matter, or if you have any questions regarding these comments, please contact Ntale Kajumba at (404)562-9620 or Madolyn Dominy at (404)562-9644.

Sincerely,



Heinz J. Mueller, Chief  
NEPA Program Office  
Office of Policy and Management

cc: Suraya Z. Teeple, JTA  
James Barr, FTA  
Elizabeth Dat, FTA



**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY**

REGION 4

ATLANTA FEDERAL CENTER  
61 FORSYTH STREET  
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30303-8960

**March 17, 2008**

**Ms. Tajsha LaShore  
Federal Transit Administration  
Region IV  
230 Peachtree Street, NW  
Suite 800  
Atlanta, Georgia 30303**

**Subject: EPA Review Comments on the Jacksonville Bus Rapid Transit  
Final Tier 1 Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PFEIS)  
CEQ No. 20080052 ERP No. FTA-E40816-FL  
Duval County, Florida**

**Dear Ms. LaShore:**

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) Region 4 reviewed the subject Tier 1 Programmatic Final Environmental Impact Statement (PFEIS) pursuant to Section 309 of the Clean Air Act, and Section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The PFEIS examines the Jacksonville Transit Authority's (JTA) proposal to construct a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system to improve mobility, offer additional mobility options, and meet the travel demand within metropolitan Jacksonville. The proposed BRT system will include transit ways, bus lanes, queue jump lanes, and Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) components.

The purpose of this Tier 1 PFEIS is to establish a system-wide, high capacity transit mode and general alignment configuration and to identify potential bus transit station areas. The proposed action is limited to JTA acquiring property for BRT stations in locations along the planned BRT system. Upon completion of the review process and the issuance of a Record of Decision (ROD), JTA will have conditional pre-award authority to purchase property around specifically identified station areas using local funds as a local match for a possible future federal project.

The PFEIS assesses the potential environmental impacts of the No-Build Alternative and Build Alternatives for designated bus rapid transit (BRT) corridors in the Jacksonville metropolitan area. The Preferred Alternative consists of four BRT service corridors extending from the Jacksonville Central Business District to suburban activity centers: Southeast, North, Southwest, and East. The Tier 1 PFEIS examines the potential impacts at a conceptual stage for the entire system.

Internet Address (URL): • <http://www.epa.gov>

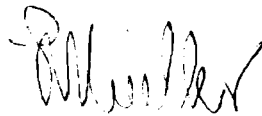
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